

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14532 151753Z

13

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIA-06 /022 W

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R 151500Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8730

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 14532

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR (BILLINGTON, JAMES)

SUBJECT: BILLINGTON VISIT TO USSR

REF: STATE 227444

1. PURSUANT TO REFTTEL, ACTING POL COUNSELOR TELEPHONED MFA USA DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR FEDOSEYEV SEPTEMBER 15 TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER BILLINGTON'S DIFFICULTIES, WITH STRESS ON OFFICIAL CHARACTER OF VISIT, AND TO SAY WE HOPED SOVIET EMBASSY CON- TENTION THAT BILLINGTON IS NOT ELIGIBLE IS UNFOUNDED. FEDOSEYEV ASKED FOR BILLINGTON TRIP DATES, SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER, AND REQUESTED LETTER ALONG LINES TELEPHONE STATEMENT. LETTER WITH FOLLOWING TEXT SENT TO HIM BY MESSENGER SAME DAY.

2. BEGIN TEXT: FURTHER TO OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OF THIS MORNING, I SHOULD LIKE TO REITERATE U.S. CONCERN OVER THE DIFFICULTIES BEING ENCOUNTERED BY PROFESSOR JAMES H. BILLINGTON IN HIS APPLICATION FOR A VISA TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 25 AND OCTOBER 1, 1976.

PROFESSOR BILLINGTON IS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIPS, APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. HE WOULD ENTER THE SOVIET UNION ON A UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT. THE PURPOSE OF THIS VISIT IS TO DISCUSS OFFICIAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WITH APPROPRIATE SOVIET OFFICIALS; THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

AND WITH THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION CONCERNING  
POSSIBLE APPOINTMENTS FOR SUCH DISCUSSIONS. IN ADDITION,  
AS YOU MAY KNOW, PROFESSOR BILLINGTON, IS A DISTINGUISHED  
SCHOLAR OF RUSSIAN HISTORY, NOW DIRECTOR OF THE WOODROW  
WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTERS FOR SCHOLARS OF THE SMITHSONIAN  
INSTITUTION IN WASHINGTON D C.

I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY EFFORTS YOU CAN MAKE TO  
INQUIRE INTO THE REASONS FOR THE DIFFICULTIES PROFESSOR  
BILLINGTON HAS FACED IN HIS APPLICATION, AND TO FACILITATE  
ISSUANCE OF A VISA TO HIM. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES DESCRIBED  
ABOVE, REFUSAL OF ENTRY WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTANDABLE.

END TEXT.  
MATLOCK

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Subject:** BILLINGTON VISIT TO USSR  
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